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## AMERICAN ART NEWS

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## ART AND GOVERNMENT

At the recent annual convention of the American Federation of Art, Henry White revived the proposal he had made under similar circumstances six years ago, that our Government should establish a Department of Art, the head of which should be able to coordinate art and industry and who should rank, if not with the Cabinet officers, at least directly after them. Mr. White alluded to his former speech advocating this plan and said that in the interval he had been strengthened in his conviction that such a department is not only needed but is inevitable.

The experiences of such European countries as France and Italy with art ministries are of sufficient lengths of years to demonstrate the value of such governmental departments and, incidentally, to show their weaknesses, these last being political and human errors inevitable in all government bureaus.

There have been a sufficient number of illustrations of government taking an active part in art affairs, to a limited extent both in Great Britain and the United States, to show the advantages of the greater art activity that would come with the creation in our government of a Department of Art. An international exposition in Paris awakened the British government to the needs of developing the nation's industrial arts, its extensive system of industrial art schools being a definite result. Our establishment of the Fine Arts Commission in Washington has demonstrated the worth of the idea, and all municipal efforts in this line have been of inestimable benefit to city and nation alike. No one has ever pretended to assess in dollars the value to New York City of the steady growth of the monumental splendor of our great buildings, our parks and our art museums. But he would be lacking in common sense who fails to realize their enormous powers of attraction for visitors. And it is Art that has made them what they are.

There was a time when our Department of Agriculture was regarded as something of a national governmental joke, but everyone realizes now what it has done for agriculture in general and the farmer and the people in particular. A Department of Art would probably be regarded much in the same light by the cynical element in our country at first, but that it would soon make itself felt for good in the national life is a foregone conclusion. That the country needs such a department, or at least a bureau in one of the existing departments with adequate powers, is very evident. Where art and industry are now struggling to get together, such a department or bureau could coordinate these efforts and make them a united whole.

This department or bureau can be established if the art organizations of America will join together in one concerted effort. Their numbers are sufficiently great, their memberships so numerically impressive, as to impress Congress with the force behind this demand if they will

only unite in presenting it. But without united action, Mr. White's will go for naught. It is up to the art associations of America to establish a Federal Department of Art.

## AN "ARID WILDERNESS"?

From the time when the late J. Pierpont Morgan began absorbing British private art collections and libraries en bloc, to be followed in this practice so far as libraries were concerned by Henry E. Huntington, the English art world has been deeply concerned over the passing from the British Isles into permanent possession in the United States of many of its greatest art and literary treasures. Sporadic attempts have been made by the British press and by individuals to devise some means whereby this outflow might be stopped, but up to the present few of these have succeeded, and then only in rare instances of individual Englishmen outbidding American buyers in the auction rooms in London.

In spite of the inevitable regret that has been expressed over the loss of these treasures, the British spirit of fair play has always been conspicuous in all discussion of the prizes obtained by American art collectors. And in view of this it is very surprising to read the shrewish note in some comments made by Sir Alfred Mond, chief commissioner of works, at the annual meeting of the National Arts Collections Fund in London during a discussion of the question of the British government making appropriations to buy works of art to prevent them from being taken out of England.

Sir Alfred Mond stated that the nation was too poor to take any action in making appropriations for such a purpose at this time. Then he added:

"America is a somewhat arid wilderness from an artistic point of view and it is easy to understand why there are so many public spirited people there able and willing to pay large sums to supply the people with the means of artistic education. Nearly all the great collections which have been formed in America have been given or will be given to national museums, a fact which may induce us in time to visit America to study them."

We hope that Sir Alfred may be induced to come over and visit us in our "somewhat arid wilderness" of art even before all the British treasures privately owned in the United States go into national museums. He is certain of having the privilege of visiting such artistic and bookish oases in our dry wilderness as the Morgan Library, the Frick mansion, the Widener home with its famous English paintings, and also that of Henry E. Huntington where the "Blue Boy" and the "Tragic Muse" hang together. He will find copious moisture and plenty of signs to relieve and guide him. America has become an art loving country. If Sir Alfred will come over at once he will probably have such a delightful time that he will regret his tactless comments on *American enterprise* and *American ambition to have the best art treasures in the world*.

## Buffalo Fine Arts Academy Buys

## Pictures by Volk, Foster and Platt

BUFFALO—The directors of the Buffalo Fine Arts Academy have bought three notable pictures for the permanent collection of the Albright Art Gallery. They are Douglas Volk's portrait of Lincoln, "Winter Landscape," by Charles A. Platt, and "Neath Clouded Skies," by Ben Foster. All the artists are Academicians. The pictures are now hung at the gallery as part of the annual display of contemporary American art.

The portrait of Lincoln is a powerful work, showing the President seated, with a folded letter in one hand, and the face revealing both the strength and gentleness characteristic of Lincoln in the days of war. It is painted against a blue-gray evening sky.

## Obituary

## EMERSON McMILLIN

Emerson McMILLIN, banker and art collector, died in his home in Mahwah, N. J., after a two days' illness of pneumonia. He was born in Ohio in 1844 and after serving with distinction in the Civil War was engaged in the iron and steel business in Ohio. He established the banking house of Emerson McMILLIN & Co. in New York City in 1891, when he began to form his famous collection of paintings. These were sold in 1913 for \$442,395, the "Orpheus and Eurydice" by Corot bringing \$75,000. For several years he contributed the \$100 Emerson McMILLIN landscape prize to the annual exhibitions of the Association of Women Painters and Sculptors. He is survived by a son and three daughters.

## Bitter Jest, Bitter Jester



## AUTOLYCUS, U.S.A.

UNCLE SAM. "NOW, THAT'S REAL DISAPPOINTING. I'D SET MY HEART ON THAT SKELETON."  
 SHADE OF SHAKESPEARE. "BUT ALL THE SAME I SHOULD FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IF IT WAS INSURED."

Mr. Punch of London has at last awakened to American enterprise in capturing so many of England's greatest art treasures, and in his humorous weekly he printed the above cartoon in which Uncle Sam is represented as "Autolycus, U. S. A." As all Shakespeare lovers

know, Autolycus of the "Winter's Tale" is a rustic picker up of "unconsidered trifles," the application being characteristic of Punch's traditional viewpoint towards the United States, a sarcastic gibe at the inferiority of our actions in relation to England.

## Studio Gossip

Emile Walters will teach landscape painting and metal work at the Pennsylvania State College this summer. He is represented in the International exhibition at Carnegie Institute by a typically American picture, "Early Autumn," awarded the Goodman prize at the Chicago Art Institute in 1921.

On Sunday last, at her studio in the Rodin Building, Miss Helen Benson, a young singer, gave a reception and tea to show a recently completed portrait of her by May Fairchild. The portrait was much admired for its character, likeness and arrangement. Miss Astrid Tyelde, sister of the sculptor, Paul Tyelde, sang several songs.

Hilda Young, of Columbus, will spend the summer abroad with Professor Philip H. Ellwood's party. She will study the art and architecture of Southern Europe, remaining in Italy longer than in any other country.

Oscar R. Coast expects to spend the summer sketching with friends in the Catskills or Adirondacks. Mr. Coast will return to his home in Santa Barbara, Cal., in the fall.

Philip Little did considerable water color painting on a recent trip to Jamaica and reports that medium very sympathetic to the atmosphere and scenery found there.

John F. Braun, president of the Philadelphia Art Alliance, and Mrs. Braun will sail in the near future for Europe. They will spend the summer motoring through France and Switzerland.

Leopold Seyffert has taken a chateau in Switzerland for the summer. An exhibition of his portraits in oil and charcoal is being held at the Minneapolis Art Institute.

W. G. Kriehoff recently sold two of his imaginative landscapes entitled "Morning" and "Evening." He expects to spend the summer painting in the Virginia mountains.

Mary Townsend Mason, who won the Mary Smith prize at the Pennsylvania Academy, will spend part of the summer sketching in Brittany.

Elmer Schofield, who is spending the summer in England, is planning to hold a large exhibition in London late in the season.

Orlando Rouland is leaving on June 15 for his studio, the "Look-out," at Marblehead, Mass. He will make the trip in his thirty-foot motor

boat, the "Oom John," which was formerly owned by the late John Burroughs, his personal friend.

Lazaar Raditz's portrait of Dr. Walton Clark, shown at the Pennsylvania Academy exhibition, was presented to the Franklin Institute at a recent meeting. Mr. Raditz is at present finishing a large portrait of Louis Walther and another of Henry La Barre Jayne, which is being painted for the University Club. Mr. Raditz will spend the summer in Maine.

Irving Wiles will spend the summer at his home in Peconic, L. I.

Grace P. Noxon sailed June 6 on the Mauretania for travel and study in France and England.

Heppie En Earl Wicks has recently finished a portrait of the poet, May Riley Smith. Miss Wicks' canvas, "A Venetian Palace," has been purchased by Lawrence Chapman.

Bertha Baxter has closed her studio at 47 Gramercy Park and gone to Sumac Lane, East Gloucester, Mass., her summer studio, where she is busily at work preparing for an exhibition to be held there in the near future.

Elizabeth Gowdy Baker, accompanied by her husband, Daniel B. Baker, recently sailed for Europe, where she will remain for five months, traveling in France, Italy and Spain. Among the portraits which Mrs. Baker did this winter are those of Mrs. Joseph C. Thomas, of Cincinnati, and Mrs. James Brown Bell, of Toledo, Ohio.

Joseph Pennell has sailed for Europe, to be absent several weeks.

R. Sloan Bredin has recently completed a portrait in which landscape plays an important part.

Richard Kimbel is going to Banff, Canadian Rockies, to paint for the summer.

Susan M. Ketcham has rented her Carnegie Studio and gone to her home at Ogunquit for the summer.

Jere Raymond Wickwire is in Cortland, N. Y., where he is painting some portraits. He expects to hold his first one-man show at the Babcock Galleries early next season.

Louis Betts, who is now in Chicago, is planning to spend the latter part of the summer in California.

Harriet Blackstone has returned to her Chelsea Studio from Chicago, where she has executed a number of portrait commissions.

Edward A. Bell is now at his home, "Bell-Buoy" in Peconic, where he will spend the summer.